

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed March 3, 2006 has been carefully considered along with the references cited therein. In the subject Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 6-7, 10 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Elkins (U.S. Design Patent No. D244,558) in view of Elkins (U.S. Patent No. 4,128,242) and Viollaz (U.S. Patent No. 5,447,311). Claims 9, 21-23 and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Elkins '558 in view of Elkins '242 and Viollaz as applied to claims 6-7, 10 and 20 above, and further in view of Motomiya (U.S. Patent No. 4,438,931). Claims 6-7, 10 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Elkins '558 in view of Elkins '242 and Golden (U.S. Patent No. 6,551,200).

Claim 20 has been amended to include the limitation of claim 21. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner remove the § 103(a) rejection over Elkins '558 in view of Elkins '242 and Golden.

Claim 20 has also been amended to recite "a muscle back portion including an extra mass portion interposed between the front surface and the muscle back surface and defining a cavity disposed vertically towards an upper portion of the extra mass portion," and "a substantial portion of the extra mass portion being positioned below the cavity." Support for these amendments is found at page 4, lines 19-20 and page 4, line 31 – page 5, line 1, respectively, and FIGURE 5. Neither Elkins '558, Elkins '242 nor Viollaz disclose or suggest the cavity disposed vertically towards an upper portion of an extra mass portion such that a substantial portion of the extra mass portion is positioned below the cavity. In both Elkins '242 and Viollaz, the cavity is centrally disposed with respect to a vertical dimension of the club head and very little mass is positioned below the cavity. Furthermore, neither reference provides any suggestion for locating the cavity vertically towards an upper portion of the extra mass portion. In Viollaz, there is very little description of the lower wall 11 of the club head. In Elkins '242, the sole of the club is a "sweep" sole. In other words, to lower the center of gravity of the clubhead, the sole is widened as measured between the front and the rear surface of the clubhead (see col. 12, line 65-col. 13, line 2), as opposed to positioning the cavity 53 towards an upper portion of the extra mass portion. Accordingly, amended claim 20 defines over the cited references. Accordingly, amended claim 20 defines over the cited references.

Claim 22 has been amended to recite "a thin sole" and "a distance between the front surface and the rear surface adjacent the top edge being greater than a distance between the front surface and the rear surface adjacent the sole." Support for this amendment is found at page 4, line 8 and FIGURE 5. Neither Elkins '558, Elkins '242 nor Viollaz disclose or suggest a thin sole or a distance between the front surface and the rear surface adjacent the top edge being greater than a distance between the front surface and the rear surface adjacent the sole. In both Elkins references, the sole is a "sweep" sole, where the distance between the front surface and the rear surface adjacent the top edge is much less than a distance between the front surface and the rear surface adjacent the sole. Moreover, any modification of the clubhead in either Elkins reference to provide a thin sole, would change the location of the center of gravity upward, which is against the principle of operation of Elkins. As for Viollaz, it discloses the distance between the front surface and the rear surface adjacent the top edge is also less than a distance between the front surface and the rear surface adjacent the sole. The new limitation of claim 22 is neither taught nor suggested by the references cited by the Examiner.

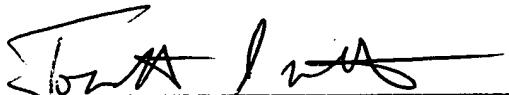
Claim 22 also recites "a cavity disposed toward an upper portion of the muscle back portion such that a large portion of the muscle back portion is positioned under the cavity so that mass is still concentrated towards the bottom of the club head." For similar reasons to those discussed with reference to claim 20, this claim amendment further defines claim 22 over the cited references. Claim 27 has been added to the application and is believed to further define claim 20 over the cited references.

CONCLUSION

All formal and informal matters having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner is of the view that all of the pending claims of the application are not in clear condition for allowance, it is requested that the Examiner telephone the undersigned for purposes of conducting a telephone interview to resolve any differences. Accordingly, an early notice of allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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June 5, 2006

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING OR TRANSMISSION

Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.8, I certify that this Amendment is being

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